

Teachers' opinion about grading in primary school

Abstract

According to the information from the Ministry of Science and Education, as many as 58.59% of primary school students have finished the 2021-2022 school year with an excellent (A) grade point average, while 24.27% of them achieved a 5.0 grade point average. Considering the fact that A (excellent) is the highest grade in Croatian schools, is it justified to conclude that new generations are much more successful and smarter than the previous ones, or is the inflation of A students a consequence of the inefficient grading system and various pressures teachers are under in the course of their work?

This research was carried out via a questionnaire among 558 primary school teachers from the Republic of Croatia. The questionnaire comprised 22 claims that examined teachers' perceptions of the changes in the grading system, atmosphere, experienced pressures, and their own education on grading. The results indicate that teachers perceive the changes in grading modes and criteria, believe that today's students can acquire excellent grades with little effort, and generally feel the pressure of the environment related to grading. Most of the surveyed teachers feel that, in the case of a parent's complaint about their child's poor grade, the responsible institutions take the side of the parent. Along the same lines, they believe that teachers who mostly award their students with high grades have fewer problems at work. The results have shown a low level of teachers' satisfaction with the implemented education on grading. No statistically significant differences between the teachers were found in regard to their workplace or the length of work experience. The majority of the surveyed teachers consider that the introduction of external evaluation would contribute to more objective grading of students' knowledge and skills.

Keywords: grade inflation, grading, primary school, teachers